

Retention & Affordability Initiative

What is the Retention and Affordability Initiative?

This is a new funding initiative that will support public postsecondary institution efforts to enroll, retain, and graduate at-risk, low-income students and improve the level of education attainment across the Commonwealth.

How does the program work?

The program funding will be allocated to colleges and universities on the basis of the extent to which they serve low-income students on their campuses and have low-income populations in their service regions. The following activities will be supported by the funding:

- Recruitment program enhancements targeted to low-income students, their parents, teachers, and schools, and specifically to populations in the service regions not represented at average rates at the institution.
- Need-based financial aid.
- Partnerships with adult education programs and high schools.
- Marketing and outreach efforts for targeted groups.
- Implementation of campus-level assessments of student access and affordability.

What is known about college affordability in Kentucky?

The Council recently completed a statewide study on affordability and concluded that while college is affordable for most students, there are some gaps. Adult students tend to face difficulties paying for college. Also, the study could not address students that were not enrolled in college because their income data is not available. Presumably some of those students opted not to attend college because of affordability concerns.

What is the Council's request?

The Council on Postsecondary Education seeks \$4 million of recurring funds in FY 2007-08 to be distributed to the public postsecondary institutions.

Why is funding needed?

The public agenda goals call for an ambitious increase in the educational attainment rate of all Kentuckians. More funding is needed to ensure that low-income populations are brought into the system so they can successfully persist and earn their degrees.



Photo source: MuSU

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